



Harmony Science Academy Fort Worth FIRST[®] Robotics Team Receives Sponsorship Support from JCPenney

Financial support will help Fort Worth students prepare for regional competition

FORT WORTH, Texas, Feb. 10, 2011 – [FIRST[®]](#) team # 2948 at Fort Worth's **Harmony Science Academy** is one of 500 high school teams J.C. Penney Company, Inc. is sponsoring this year as part of the company's multi-year goal to bring *FIRST* to more than 1,100 communities in the United States. For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology – known as [FIRST](#) – is a not-for-profit organization founded by [Dean Kamen](#) to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology by engaging them in innovative robotics competitions. Prototype is a veteran team of 20 Harmony Science Academy tenth, eleventh and twelfth graders that will spend six intense weeks designing and building an original robot for the regional *FIRST* Robotics Competition scheduled for April 7-9, 2011 at the Dallas Convention Center.

"Having our students involved in *FIRST* is not just about increasing educational opportunities in science and technology; but also instilling well-rounded life capabilities such as self-confidence, communication and leadership," said Gokalp Celik, team coach and Harmony teacher. "JCPenney's sponsorship demonstrates a commitment to investing in our local youth by making participation in *FIRST* possible."

JCPenney's sponsorship of 500 *FIRST* teams this season marks the beginning of the company's philanthropic goal to introduce *FIRST* to more schools and communities throughout the U.S. and encourage greater participation among minority and female students.

The Prototype team received this year's challenge, "[Logo Motion[™]](#)" and a kit of parts made up of motors, batteries, a control system, a PC and a mix of automation components – but no instructions. Working with three professional engineering mentors and their teacher, **the team has six weeks to build a robot that can maneuver a field flanked by poles and earn points by hanging as many triangle, circle and square logo pieces on each pole as possible.** Bonus points will be awarded for each robot that can hang

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and assemble logo pieces to form the *FIRST* logo as well as deploy a “mini-bot” to climb vertical poles positioned within the middle of the field. Competitions measure the effectiveness of each team’s robot and the students’ ability to collaborate effectively. You can track progress on the team’s website, www.hsafortworth.org/prototype.

Schools, communities and government acknowledge the need to improve the country’s global economic competitiveness by increasing aptitudes in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) among America’s youth. Studies show that *FIRST* students are 3 times more likely to major in engineering in college, 10 times as likely to have an apprenticeship their freshman year, more than twice as likely to pursue a science or technology career, and nearly 4 times as likely to pursue a career in engineering.

Currently in its twentieth season, *FIRST* Robotics Competition anticipates close to 2,100 teams will compete in 48 regional contests in the U.S., Canada and Israel, as well as 9 district competitions and a state championship in Michigan — all leading up to the 2011 *FIRST* Championship at the Edward Jones Dome, April 27-30, in St. Louis, Mo. This season, participating high school students are eligible to apply for more than \$14 million in scholarships from leading universities and colleges.

About Harmony Public Schools

Harmony Public Schools are high-performing K-12 Texas public charter schools focusing on math, science, engineering and computer technologies to provide opportunities for underserved communities. Almost 1700 students attend 33 campus locations with a 100% college acceptance rate. Visit <http://hsafortworth.org>.

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